

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 02372 120723Z

12

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9793

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO UNN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA UNN

AMEMBASSY ROME

CINCEUR

CINCLANT

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 2372

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON ALVARO CUNHAL

SUMMARY: COURTESY CALL ON COMMUNIST CUNHAL USED BY HIM TO RAISE AZORES QUESTION. HE OPPOSED ON PRINCIPLE TO FOREIGN BASES AND IN ANY CASE FEELS NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE LEFT TO FUTURE ELECTED GOP TO BE DEALT WITH IN CONTEXT EAST-WEST DETENTE. CUNHAL AFFABLE, INTELLIGENT AND MOST IMPRESSIVE. END SUMMARY

1. CALLED ON PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP)

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PAGE 02 LISBON 02372 120723Z

SECRETARY GENERAL AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO

ALVARO CUNHAL JUNE 11. HE WAS CORDIAL AND PLEASANT AND SAID THAT PORTUGAL ANXIOUS HAVE GOOD AND EVEN IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH U.S.

2. AFTER PLEASANTRIES COMPLETED, HE APOLOGIZED FOR NOT BEING PRACTICED IN DIPLOMACY AND THEREFORE SPEAKING MORE FRANKLY THAN HE SHOULD, BUT HE WISHED TO RAISE THE QUESTION OF THE AZORES BASE. HIS MESSAGE WAS THAT HE DID NOT THINK THAT THIS WAS THE TIME TO PROCEED WITH SUCH NEGOTIATIONS BUT THAT THEY SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THEY COULD BE DEALT WITH IN THE LARGER CONTEXT OF DETENTE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. THERE WAS ALSO A SUGGESTION THAT THIS WAS A MATTER WHICH SHOULD BE LEFT FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN PORTUGAL, I.E., THE ELECTION OF A PERMANENT CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT. HE ALSO EXPRESSED HIS OWN PERSONAL VIEW AND THAT OF HIS PARTY WHICH WAS OPPOSED TO ANY FOREIGN BASES ON PORTUGUESE SOIL. I SAID THAT, FOR SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT REASONS, USG HAD INSTRUCTED ME NOT TO PRESS AZORES NEGOTIATIONS AT PRESENT TIME.

3. WHILE ABOVE WAS OBVIOUSLY PRINCIPAL MESSAGE HE WANTED TO DELIVER, SINCE I HAD NOT EVEN MENTIONED AZORES, HE WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO EMPHASIZE (A) HIS OWN AND PCP'S GENUINE DEVOTION TO ORDERLY ESTABLISHMENT OF GENUINE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN PORTUGAL, AND (B) THAT WORRIES HE FELT EXISTED IN U.S. THAT PARTICIPATION IN PCP IN GOVERNMENT HERE MIGHT INTERFERE WITH CLOSENESS OF US-GOP RELATIONS WERE UNFOUNDED. HE REITERATED SPINOLA'S STATEMENT TO ME OF CONFIDENCE THAT ACTIONS OF NEW GOP WOULD MAKE IT MUCH EASIER FOR USG TO SUPPORT PORTUGAL.

4. AS TO AFRICAN POLICY, HE REITERATED WHAT WE ALL KNOW. ENTIRE GOP UNITED THAT FIGHTING MUST STOP PROMPTLY AND SOLUTIONS IN ALL PROVINCES MUST BE POLITICAL. THERE ARE SERIOUS DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WITHIN GOP AS TO MECHANICS OF ACCOMPLISHING THOSE POLITICAL SOLUTIONS.
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PAGE 03 LISBON 02372 120723Z

5. COMMENT: SINCE CUNHAL HAS BEEN OUT OF CIRCULATION SO LONG, PERHAPS BRIEF PERSONAL IMPRESSION WORTHWHILE. THIS IS AN IMPRESSIVE AND ATTRACTIVE MAN. MAKES GREAT POINT OF NOT BEING DIPLOMAT AND SPEAKING FRANKLY AND APPEARS TO DO SO. IN EXCELLENT FRENCH HE SPEAKS REASONABLY, WITH CARE AND IN LOW KEY. HE DISTINGUISHES CAREFULLY, WHERE NECESSARY, BETWEEN HIS

POSITION AS MEMBER GOP GOVERNMENT AND THAT OF PCP AS
POLITICAL PARTY. IN MY INNOCENCE HE IMPRESSED ME AS
A MAN WITH WHOM ONE COULD DEAL FRANKLY AND DIRECTLY
ACROSS THE TABLE. END COMMENT
SCOTT

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